

- 8 Do you believe that Mr. Barber should allow himself to be blamed for this accident?
- 9 If you were the principal, what would you do about Mr. Sorensen?

### PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE

THE ADMINISTRATOR  
—considers the impact of one's  
administrative practices on others

### Case Study 113

Alice Greenleaf had been excited about her first principalship. While some things probably went quite well, she had a feeling that others did not, but she did not know why. She spent quite a bit of time thinking about what she had done, and she still could not understand why there seemed to be some negative feelings about her. Maybe she just imagined it all!

Alice started Monday by sending individual teachers memos that she had written to them over the weekend. She always reserved part of Sunday afternoon so that she could think about the school and what needed to be done. Then she wrote the memos so that they could be in mailboxes Monday morning. She prided herself on her efficiency, and this was just one example. (She had talked to a fellow principal who said that he never wrote memos but visited teachers when he wanted to tell them something. You could spend a whole day just doing that, Alice thought.)

At Tuesday's teacher meeting, Alice was taken by surprise when Janet asked whether they were going to get the computers "in my lifetime." Alice explained to Janet that although she had promised that each teacher would have a computer connected to the district office and to the Internet, she later found that no funds were available. It was not her fault.

On Wednesday, two teachers came up to Alice and asked why the process on book selection had been changed for the next year. Alice patiently told them that a principal had to make a lot of tough decisions in a short period of time and that she had not had time to explain to

the staff all the reasons behind every decision. This decision was one that she had to make quickly.

Thursday at the Principal's Advisory Committee, Alice stated that she had set the date for the Open House, had established committees, arranged a timetable, and made decisions as to what activities would be a part of the Open House. However, she wanted to share her decision-making with the committee by having them decide on what food should be served and who should be asked to bring each food item.

Friday afternoon, Alice met with the superintendent who wanted to check to see how she was doing. Alice said, "I think things are going great. The school seems to be running well, and I am working on Open House now."

The superintendent paused and then said, "Alice, sometimes we do not realize that what we do as administrators has an impact on our teachers. Do you think about your impact on your teachers?"

### Discussion Questions

- 1 Alice probably did not understand the superintendent's point. Maybe you can help her. Looking at Monday, what impact could there be of sending memos to teachers instead of talking to them personally?
- 2 On Tuesday, the subject of computers came up. What happens when an administrator promises something to teachers and cannot follow through? Can you think of examples where an administrator did something just like this? How did the teachers (or others) feel? Were there any long-term feelings towards this administrator?
- 3 What's the big deal about explaining administrative decisions to teachers in Wednesday's example? Aren't administrators paid to make decisions— isn't that enough, without having to explain "why, why, why" all the time?
- 4 On Thursday, Alice wanted to share decision-making with the teachers on the Advisory Committee. Do you see the problem here?

### Comments

This author was once told, "The teachers want to know who made the decision and why." It seemed that the source of the decision-making was more important than what the decision was. Administrators